

# Exploration of the Reform of Macroeconomics Course with Integrating Ideological-Political Elements

**Kemiao Fu\***

Vanke School Pudong (Highschool Department), Pudong New District, Shanghai 201315, China

\*Corresponding author: Kemiao Fu, [smxfkm@126.com](mailto:smxfkm@126.com)

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**Abstract:** Integrating ideological and political education into university teaching has become the core content of current higher education work in China, and it is also one of the important factors in ensuring the quality of higher education. As one of the fundamental courses in the field of economic management, integrating ideological and political education into the teaching of macroeconomics is highly in line with the current educational reform concept in Chinese universities. Based on this, the author will provide suggestions on how to integrate ideological and political education with macroeconomics courses from three aspects, namely teaching philosophy, teaching methods, and teaching content, to provide some reference and assistance for the teaching reform of macroeconomics courses.

**Keywords:** Macroeconomics; Ideological and political education; Curriculum reform

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## 1. Introduction

Ideological and political education refers to a comprehensive educational concept that aims to build a comprehensive educational system that covers all members, all educational phases, and all kinds of curricula. By doing this, ideological-political elements can be integrated into various curricula to generate a synergistic effect in cultivating morality and nurturing talents, which is the fundamental mission of education. At the National Conference on Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Institutions, it was proposed that “no one can stand firm without virtue, and the fundamental aspect of education lies in moral character.” Therefore, college students need to receive a good ideological education and positive influence before graduation. Universities should put cultivating morality and nurturing talents as the core of education by integrating ideological and political education into all sequences of education to achieve whole-process education and full-staff education and also to open up a new path for China’s higher education innovation <sup>[1]</sup>.

Macroeconomics, as one of the foundational courses in the field of economic management, plays an important role in shaping students’ thinking patterns and cultivating their understanding of current macroeconomic events. Traditionally speaking, Macroeconomics teachers tend to emphasize more on the

teaching of theoretical knowledge but seldom recognize the importance of ideological-political education and its integration with the course. Macroeconomics is crucial to the development of the country. The current teaching in universities can combine the teaching of macroeconomics theory with the national situation of China to guide students to use theory to interpret China's economic development. This not only ensures the scientificity of the interpretation results but also may lead to more accurate analytical results that are in line with China's current national conditions <sup>[2]</sup>. At the same time, in the process of teaching macroeconomics, consciously combining theoretical knowledge with the actual local economic development situation can effectively stimulate students' learning enthusiasm. Meanwhile, facing the fast development of science and technology in China and the complicated and ever-changing international situation, it is essential to promote national security education. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate ideological and political theory into macroeconomic courses and carry out ideological and political education work while teaching theoretical knowledge. The author will investigate from the perspective of teaching practice in macroeconomics, explore in detail the methods of integrating ideological and political education into macroeconomics courses in China, and propose corresponding reform strategies from three aspects: teaching philosophy, teaching methods, and teaching content <sup>[3]</sup>.

## **2. Reform of teaching philosophy**

As a new teaching concept under the background of moral education, the application of ideological and political education in macroeconomics courses provides direction for the reform of the course. In traditional macroeconomics course teaching, the development of teaching work often focuses more on the transmission of theoretical knowledge, and the emphasis on the leading role of moral education is insufficient. This leads to a serious disconnection between professional education and value guidance in the teaching process, which may negatively impact the formation of ideological consciousness among college students over time. Thus, teachers should actively change their teaching philosophy and adopt new teaching insights. When explaining the basic knowledge of macroeconomics, they should not only ensure the scientific nature of the subject knowledge but also appropriately cultivate critical thinking to help college students establish correct ideological values. Therefore, this requires macroeconomics teachers not only to have a solid theoretical foundation in economics, but also to keep up with the times, take moral education as the core task of teaching work, and permeate it into every link of the teaching process, to achieve effective implementation of ideological and political work in macroeconomics courses <sup>[4]</sup>.

## **3. Reform of teaching methods**

### **3.1. Using online platforms to improve teaching methods**

To achieve an effective combination of ideological and political education with macroeconomic knowledge, and fully leverage the educational role of macroeconomics, teachers should deeply explore the moral education content in professional courses. In the era of information technology, various kinds of online materials such as highly qualified national courses series are available to enhance teaching. Teachers in China can use the Chinese University Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) platform to select course resources suitable for their class's learning. Through online teaching platforms, students can prepare and preview promptly before class. As a result, students' participation and engagement during class time would be highly guaranteed. This not only helps to comprehensively improve the teaching efficiency of macroeconomics classes but also enhances students' mastery of professional knowledge. Nowadays, there are many economic news materials on the internet. Teachers can effectively use these resources to help students broaden their macroeconomic visions

and conduct in-depth case analyses. By using real-world examples, teachers can help students build a closer understanding of subject knowledge. In addition, teachers can use online teaching platforms such as MOOC to carry out flipped classroom teaching, allowing students to complete the corresponding preview and thinking work before class, and fully utilize the limited time in offline classrooms to carry out efficient classroom discussions. In classroom discussions, students can be inspired to think. Teachers can not only answer questions and clarify doubts for students promptly, but also effectively control the learning direction and summarize the final discussion results. In summary, the application of online learning platforms not only cultivates students' self-learning ability and exercises their theoretical knowledge application ability, but also helps the development of diversified teaching practice <sup>[5]</sup>.

### **3.2. Improving teaching methods through discussions, reports, and other forms**

In traditional teaching practice, it is common for the teaching process to be lecture-based and teacher-oriented. Students, often as passive learners, only follow the teacher's instructions to carry out learning and thinking. This leads to students being unable to express their ideas on time in the classroom, and the classroom atmosphere is relatively dull. To change this situation, teachers can introduce more interactive teaching strategies to enhance students' classroom participation and stimulate their learning enthusiasm. For example, after students have learned about inflation-related knowledge, teachers can use "inflation" as a discussion topic for students to collect information and help them engage in corresponding discussions in class, allowing students to raise questions and solve them themselves to cultivate their ability to discover, analyze, and solve problems. Through these interactive forms of classroom teaching content, students can break through the constraints of traditional classroom teaching, develop a higher sense of participation in learning, recognize the application value of subject knowledge, and have a clearer understanding of macroeconomics knowledge through in-depth interaction and communication, thereby achieving the comprehensive development of students' overall quality <sup>[6]</sup>.

As an upgraded version of the discussion format, reporting can enable students to gain a deeper understanding of subject knowledge, generate a deeper understanding of macroeconomic policies in their preparation work, and further enhance their professional sensitivity. Meanwhile, teachers can prepare students with some Project Based Learning (PBL) projects. During the preparation process, teachers can discuss together with students to monitor their progress. When reporting, groups can be divided based on the number of students in the class. Teachers should give positive feedback to groups that perform well to strengthen students' confidence and stimulate their competitive awareness <sup>[7]</sup>.

### **3.3. Improving teaching methods through diversified teaching evaluations and other forms**

Compared to the traditional evaluation system that uses exam scores as the sole criterion, after integrating ideological and political education into macroeconomics courses, teachers should promptly switch their teaching evaluation methods and include student classroom learning and discussion as a part of teaching evaluation. Through diversified examination and evaluation methods, teachers can have a more comprehensive understanding of cultivating students' comprehensive abilities. In addition, teachers can also use forms such as group discussions and group problem analysis to evaluate the learning outcomes of students and to use this information to observe their performance in daily team collaboration and interpersonal communication. This comprehensive evaluation method can also effectively stimulate students' self-learning, problem-solving, and critical-thinking abilities <sup>[8]</sup>.

The implementation of diversified teaching evaluation should also fully consider the individual differences of students. Personalized evaluation can help teachers gain a more comprehensive understanding of students'

learning and development needs, and provide different guidance and assistance for different students. Students can also achieve rapid growth by learning from each other. Therefore, by developing and implementing a diversified teaching evaluation system, students can be provided with more comprehensive and objective evaluation. This multi-dimensional assessment method can also enable teachers to identify obstacles encountered by students during the learning process and give help accordingly. This kind of teaching evaluation method can greatly improve students' learning enthusiasm and efficiency, and promote their comprehensive growth <sup>[9]</sup>.

## **4. Reform of teaching content**

The integration of ideological and political education with macroeconomics courses has brought new teaching content to macroeconomics teaching. Since the reform and opening up, China has accumulated much practical experience in economic development, including socialism with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, the uniqueness and non-replicability of China's economic development have become a focus of attention for many economists around the world. Therefore, in the integration of macroeconomics into ideological and political work in the curriculum, the following aspects can be approached.

### **4.1. Integrating ideological and political education into the teaching syllabus**

The integration of ideological and political education into the teaching syllabus is due to the traditional teaching syllabus's excessive emphasis on the teaching of professional knowledge and insufficient emphasis on moral education. On May 28th, 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the "Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Curriculum" which emphasized the need to implement ideological and political education in the talent cultivation system of universities, comprehensively promote the construction of ideological and political courses in universities, and fully play the educational role of each course. Consequently, integrating ideological and political education into macroeconomics courses, and improving students' political identity and professional competence has become the core task of the current teaching reform of macroeconomics courses <sup>[10]</sup>.

Through practice, it has been found that integrating ideological and political education into the curriculum can strengthen students' sense of social responsibility in macroeconomics teaching, enabling them to deeply reflect on the relationship between macroeconomics and social situations in their studies and helping them develop correct political awareness and professional ethics. Through this method, students can gain a deeper understanding of macroeconomic theory, enabling them to better utilize their knowledge to solve economic problems in the real world and become highly qualified economic professionals who can promote social development. Additionally, integrating ideological and political education into the teaching syllabus can help teachers better fulfill their core mission of teaching and educating people, ensure that the implementation of teaching work can help students establish correct worldviews, life views, and value judgments, promote comprehensive development of student's abilities, and cultivate high-qualified and comprehensive professional talents for the development of the country <sup>[11]</sup>.

Accordingly, incorporating ideological and political education elements into the development of the syllabus can effectively enhance the teaching effectiveness of macroeconomics, help students form correct political attitudes and professional ethics, and contribute to their comprehensive development.

### **4.2. Organize macroeconomic ideological and political case studies**

In traditional teaching models, there is a lack of systematic case summaries in the implementation of teaching work, which leads to a significant reduction in the learning effectiveness of students. To promote the effective

integration of ideological and political education with professional courses, teachers need to include some real-life examples of economic events or problem-solving methods in their teaching such as China's industrial upgrading and urbanization, international trade, or other contents. Teachers can carefully select and classify these cases, match theoretical knowledge with corresponding events and methods, and finally make a set of macroeconomic teaching cases with the characteristics of the school. Applying these cases to daily teaching can help students better understand economic phenomena and laws, and enable them to use the economic analysis methods they have learned to explain the causes of various phenomena and to predict and evaluate the possible outcomes of different macroeconomic policies. Through this method, ideological and political education can be integrated into teaching and provide strong assistance in shaping student awareness and cultivating professional abilities <sup>[12]</sup>.

The compilation of case sets should be based on the theoretical framework of macroeconomics to ensure systematicity and comprehensiveness. In the selection of cases, emphasis should be placed on typical cases and cases with high research value to ensure that the selected cases have high applicability. Studying these real economic cases can not only help students strengthen their mastery of professional knowledge through solving practical problems but also cultivate critical thinking and their ability to analyze and think about economic problems from multiple perspectives. By organizing and using the case set, it can lay a solid foundation for students' future learning and development <sup>[13]</sup>.

### **4.3. Combining theory with practice to cultivate students' comprehensive abilities**

Integrating theoretical knowledge of macroeconomics with the reality of national economic development can effectively enhance students' understanding of professional knowledge. Teachers can introduce some real cases in their teaching and guide students to analyze the data in these cases. Also, teachers can guide students to investigate the impacts of macroeconomic policies on different macroeconomic goals at different levels. During teaching practice, teachers can encourage students to use statistics to collect and analyze data, which may help students understand the current economic situation better. Moreover, teachers can organize students to conduct social surveys, to communicate with local authorities to better understand policies. Additionally, during the teaching process, teachers should pay attention to the cultivation of students' thinking abilities, stimulate their learning enthusiasm by designing diverse social practice activities, guide students to pay more attention to various problems in social development, and improve their sense of social responsibility <sup>[14]</sup>.

In teaching, teachers can use research-based learning to teach macroeconomics courses. By formulating corresponding topics or research content for students, combined with the requirements of ideological and political education, students can independently or in groups explore the relationship between national economic development and social progress. During this period, students can achieve comprehensive improvement in their thinking consciousness and innovation ability, allowing them to have a more thorough understanding of social issues and a more scientific and accurate analysis of problems <sup>[15]</sup>.

## **5. Conclusion**

In recent years, the status of ideological and political education in the curriculum has gradually risen in higher education. Economic courses are closely related to people's daily lives, therefore, the integration of ideological and political education with macroeconomics teaching is particularly important. Based on this, the author analyzes the current reform path of integrating macroeconomics courses with ideological and political work from three aspects: teaching philosophy, teaching methods, and teaching content. It is hoped that this can contribute to the cultivation of more versatile professional talents in universities.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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